

Let's begin with a fairly straightforward game of "Who Am I?" I'll give you a set of clues:

- 1) I was born lovely in the sight of God, created to be a deliverer.
- 2) The ruler of the land sought to kill me in my infancy.
- 3) But I grew in wisdom right there in his very city.
- 4) In adulthood, I told the people I was sent by God to save them.
- 5) The people rejected me and sought to kill me.
- 6) But my Father's plan was unstoppable by even my own people.
- 7) I saved all who had faith through nothing less than shed blood.

I am... Moses. It is easy to see the parallels, the shadow of Jesus in Moses story. In addition to these connections, there are many ways in which Moses story and Jesus story connect.

- a. Born at a time when Israel was under foreign dominion
- b. Had to deal directly with wicked kings.
- c. Both worked miracles as evidence of God's plan
- d. Both provided water to thirsty people
- e. Both sent out 12 men (spies)
- f. Both were Prophets, Priest, Kings, Teachers

This connection is definitely constructed by God. More tangibly, it was used by the Holy Spirit (Acts 7)

- a. **7:20** – Born lovely in the sight of God – Exo 2 says he was "beautiful".
- b. **7:21** – Pharaoh sought to kill all the baby Hebrew boys so he was hidden away.
- c. **7:22** – He grew right there in the same city, becoming a well educated man.
- d. **7:23-26** – He went to help his people, understanding his role as deliverer.
- e. **7:27-28** – They rejected him. Exo 2 records Pharaoh was told and sought to kill Moses.
- f. **7:30,35** – But God's plan would not be stopped! Moses was the man God had chosen.
- g. **7:36** – He worked incredible miracles to show all the people what God was doing.

Stephen's Point – **7:51-53** – You are doing what God's people have always done – rejected the one whom God sent to teach them, help them, save them. Except, in Jesus, so much more so!

Jesus not only parallels the story, he is the substance of the shadow and exceeds it in every way.

- a. -- He was born lovely in the sight of God – born of a virgin.
- b. -- Herod killed many baby boys in an explicit attempt to stop him.
- c. -- He grew in form and wisdom but also an understanding of His identity as God's Son.
- d. -- He spent three years teaching His own people he had come to save them eternally from sins.
- e. -- They rejected Him and sought to kill him. They captured and mocked and beat Him.
- f. -- But God's plan was set from the beginning of time to deliver us from Satan's hands and death.
- g. -- He worked incredible miracle, including 4 Resurrections from the death, even his own!

The hope in Stephen's sermon, which was unrealized within those present, was for people to be humbled from seeing how they are repeating history, and turn to Jesus and beg for His Salvation!

Well, let me use this study as a jumping point to talk a bit about the religious observances of Christmas day. I will spare you details about its history and also known and glaring hypocrisies often associated with its practice. Those studies aren't of benefit to us today. *Suffice it to say that Christmas has long been established as a religious day of worship in celebration of the birth of Jesus.*

My position is that no such memorial or celebration was taught to us by God, so while we appreciate and stand for the virgin birth of Christ each and every day we live, I will not offer before the throne of God a day of memorial chosen by men.

To help explain that, suffer me a moment to illuminate one more parallel between Moses and Jesus BLOOD. When it came right down to it, Moses saved and liberated the people through Blood.

Exodus 12:3-13 – Moses taught about the importance of unblemished lamb blood to serve as a sign for the people to trigger the grace of God as they avoid death by the death of another. (Not even Moses, but the animal sacrifice).

Exodus 12:14-17 – (Taught before the event) A memorial. A permanent ordinance was established: a yearly memorial of that blood, the death, and the life that was preserved by it. This God set up.

Exodus 12:43-47 – This was an ordinance and a celebration of life by the blood that was shed.

I would note that, while Moses birth was special. Moses life was special. Moses leadership was special. And the company of Israel remembered him and spoke of him and respected him for generations (clearly still a memorable figure when Stephen preached of him), there were no celebrations created to honor any aspect of his birth or life. But one was started and held: **that which God designed.**

The Blood of the Exodus was a mere shadow of the great **Blood of Jesus** shed for our sins.

I Corinthians 5:7-8 – Christ was all that Moses was and so much more – He was the Passover Lamb!

I Cor. 11:23-26 – And He established before it happened a memorial to the covenant of freedom! A remembrance, not of His birth and life, but His death and the covenant ratified by His blood.

Just like it was a permanent ordinance for Israel, the Lord's Supper memorial is "**until He comes.**"

It is not yearly, but that was not our decisions. It was observed on "**the first day of the week.**"

And maybe that's the best way to approach an explanation for why we observe the Lord's Supper once per week and why we do not offer a celebration to God once per year for Christ's birth.

God wants us to have a constant celebratory faith for the birth and life of the deliverer. There is no date needed, no festival, no world wide holy day (etymology of holiday). No more than we need to have "Jesus first miracle day" or "Jesus was baptized day." These are ongoing.

But the blood. The blood sealed the deal. The blood paid the price. The blood, the death, the sacrifice made life possible for those dead in sin. And to show the imagery in shadow form look at the same parallels with Moses and his special birth, miraculous life, but the memorial is of the blood.

Final thought – *In Moses' story, the memorial was set up before it happened, but it would only be enjoyed and participated in by those, in that day, who DID Something – they believed so completely that they covered their doorway with the blood. Their house was washed in the blood of the lamb.*

Long before you were born, God established a weekly memorial to the soul saving power of Jesus death and the shedding of the covenant making blood. But the only people who can truly enjoy this fellowship meal with God are those who DO something. You must be washed in the blood of the lamb!

I watched my son partake of this memorial for the first time not too many weeks ago. He's always celebrated the birth of Jesus, the life of Jesus, the identity of Jesus, in singing and growing faith, from his youngest age of attending Bible classes. But on that Sunday, for the first time, it was different.

I John 1:7 – the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin

Romans 6:3-4 - says we are united with His death (body and blood) in baptism. Luke did that.

I Cor. 11:24-26 – he was then able to partake of the memorial and proclaim fellowship with God!

Christmas or no Christmas, you won't here much from me. But Blood or no Blood? You will never stop hearing preaching on the need to see it for what it is, be united with its power, and remember it every single Sunday, as our God has authorized as a perpetual memorial of Jesus.